

# Dwight's Journal of Music.

WHOLE No. 714.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, AUG. 15, 1868.

VOL. XXVIII. No. 11.

## The Development of the Concert System Concert Rooms and "Salons." Aristocracy, Plutocracy, Lovers of Art, and Meccenates.\*

(Continued from page 284.)

With regard to Leipsic, I discovered in Metzler's *Musical Library* for 1737, the following passage relating to Bach's concert: "The two musical concerts or assemblies, which are held here every week, are still extremely flourishing. One is conducted by Herr Joh. Seb. Bach, chapel-master to his Highness the Duke of Weissenfels, and musical director at the churches of St. Thomas and St. Nicholas, and, out of the fair-time, is held once a week at Zimmermann's Coffee-house, No. 3, Catharinenstrasse, on Friday from 8—10 o'clock; but twice during the fair, on Tuesdays and Fridays, precisely at the same hour. The other is directed by Herr Joh. Gottlieb Körner, musical director at St. Paul's church." Then we find further on: "The members composing these musical concerts consist chiefly of the students here, for there are always good musici among them, so that frequently, as is well known, some of them become in time celebrated virtuosi. Every musician is allowed to play publicly at these concerts, and, moreover, there are listeners present capable of appreciating the worth of a skilful musician. I have been assured that there still exist in Leipsic a few advertisements and programmes of these concerts of Bach, but in the possession of private persons who will not trust them to any one for publication. Bach is said, moreover, to have introduced, whenever he could, new motets and cantatas in the course of the church service, and to have profited by the opportunity to get up sacred concerts, for among the complaints made by his opponents is one to the effect that it was always necessary to purchase, at the church doors, new words for the cantatas and other compositions of the cantor, a course which, it is true, increased his receipts, but put the pious frequenters of the house of God to extra expense. This is all I have been able to learn about Leipsic itself. In vain I searched the papers then published there for further facts concerning Bach. I found in Metzler's *Library*, which was very celebrated in its day, a long extract from a work on music at the Court of Russia, informing the reader that a Count Reppin, *anno* 1720, played the flute very well; that a Col. Sumarokow had composed a Russian opera; that a young lady, fourteen years old, of the name of Beligradski, was a fine pianist; that the celebrated mechanician Winraw, who had formerly been a blacksmith, and was the same for whom Handel composed his famous Variations in E major, had exhibited at St. Petersburg a musical machine which supplied the place of an entire orchestra; and, lastly, that in the German Protestant church of St. Peter, Concerts Spirituels were given, at which a Passion-music by Telemann had been performed. The first Leipsic musical paper which busied itself about the musical affairs of that town was established in the year 1798, when journals of this kind sprang up everywhere, and even political prints gave more detailed notices on music. All the information which I have gathered from these journals regarding concerts invariably proves the assertion I made at first: that up to 1830, or thereabouts, concert-givers were, with the rarest exceptions, excellent, and sometimes even distinguished composers. What Hummel, Moscheles, Ries, Rode, Lipinsky, and Spohr did, needs no especial description: as long as they practised their art, the concert-room was

still the rendezvous of those who loved music; the efforts of Paganini, and more especially of Liszt, produced in public musical matters a total revolution, the results of which were that the virtuoso was placed before the composer; that the artistic value of a work was thrown into the background by the performance of the executant; that the personality of the concert-giver was one of the principal elements of success; and that, finally, the concert room was transformed into a "salon," and the latter, on the other hand, into a sort of preparatory school for the concert room.

I have just uttered the word Salon. It is very variously applied in Germany. We speak of salon musicians and salon painters—we have in Germany all the attributes of the salon, only the salon itself is wanting. This said salon is a specifically French production, springing from religious and political tendencies; continued, thanks to intellectual and artistic movements; and maintained by the principle of social equality. Under Louis XV., the salon as a *bureau d'esprit*, was the rendezvous of the Encyclopædists, of witty writers, and of accomplished and eloquent scholars, in whose company clever and brilliant nobles felt more at their ease than in the apartments of the Marquise de Pompadour and of her fair successors. Every celebrated man, or every man who wished to be considered such, was under the necessity of being introduced at Mme. Geoffrin's or at Mme. Tercin de Doffant's; even the misanthrope Rousseau was, for a time, a most zealous attendant of those ladies' salons, and German princes had in the Gotha gentleman, afterwards Baron Grimm, some one who kept them especially informed as to all that was going on there. Since that period salons have been an inseparable constituent part of social life in France; even during the Reign of Terror, many a man who, during the day, had worn a red cap and played the *sansculotte*, glided in the evening, dressed as a fop, into the elegant apartments of Mme. Recamier and others, and indulged in pleasant conversation, without troubling himself about the fact that, the next day, perhaps, some envious and wearisome member of the Convention might accuse him of being an aristocrat, and bring him to the guillotine. Under the Directory and the Consulate, as well as the first Empire, Salon life extended more and more, and many a political celebrity of after years was obliged, under the then Cæsar, the foe of "Idealists" to content himself with the modest reputation of a Salon hero. Napoleon himself expressly required his generals to marry clever women and open Salons. The latter were, then as now, an excellent school for a refined kind of life, in which questions of art, and even the highest questions of philosophy, were settled, in clever conversation, *entre deux tasses de thé*. By this system, persons of a rough nature may, it is true, be somewhat softened down, and rendered susceptible of better impressions than they otherwise would be; many are compelled to take an interest in art and science, in order not to attract attention by their ignorance, nay even for the artist an incentive for exertion is not wanting—but, on the whole, we do not find in it the correct conception of the True, the higher view of life; and brilliant conversational powers, possessing the art of adapting even what is highest to the general amusement hold, the upper hand over conscientious and perhaps dry scientific research, that seeks to attain only what is true, and shrinks from handing round upon a Salon salver the fruit of serious study. In this respect, it is to be regarded as an incalculable advantage for German art and science that the Salon has never really flourished in Germany, while, in France,

the present predominance of plutocracy and *parvenus*, has been productive of one advantage to science, namely that, thrown back upon itself, the latter has been obliged to become more serious and stricter. French Salons were the nursery of the higher class of virtuosity, which has shot up so vigorously in the German concert room. The founders of the French romantic school which reigned supreme in the Salons during the last years of the Restoration, and the first of the July dynasty, were the teachers of Liszt and his school. It was they who first pushed personality and individuality, together with the impression produced by them, into the foreground, and who referred the solution of all questions of religion, politics, and industry, not merely to the domain of art generally, but to that of their own persons. Every one of them pretended to have found, and to be capable of directly carrying out, the solution of each of the questions I have mentioned. It is only *thus* that we can explain the fact that such men as Victor Hugo and Lamartine were first enthusiastic legitimists, then sincere adherents of the July dynasty, and lastly republicans and socialists, without any one being able to accuse them of trimming; at each of these changes, they were convinced that it was *their* mission to set the seal upon the movement, just as Liszt and his disciples feel convinced that *they* are destined to effect a total revolution in musical matters. Precisely as it is only by versatility of intellectual tendencies, and by a boundless passion for undertaking all kinds of styles, that we can explain how Victor Hugo, the author of *Les Orientales* and *Les Chants du Crépuscule*, could write a drama like *Lucrezia Borgia*, and actually, in the preface, represent it as being moral, it is only by adopting the same view of things that we can explain how Liszt has frequently taken the highest intellectual flights, and at the same time composed the most rapid operatic fantasias; and that, even as a pious *abbé*, he transcribes motives of Verdi's. To his own performances, and to those of his most eminent pupils, in the field of virtuosity, we may apply the same judgment that Goethe pronounced, in a letter to Zelter, when speaking of the French Romantics: "The reader is frequently unable to divest himself of the idea that all literature is a trade, but there is at bottom so thorough a knowledge of old times and of circumstances now passed, of remarkable complications and incredible realities, that *we cannot call such a work either empty or bad*." Thus, too, the school in question has for its basis a thoroughly developed knowledge of every kind of musical literature, and this knowledge deserves at any rate appreciation and admiration.

The effect produced by the genial virtuosity of Liszt and of his pupils was, and is, greater in Germany than anywhere else, not only because music is more cultivated here than in other countries, but because, of all artists, virtuosos, especially those coming from abroad, were the only ones who met in the fashionable world that reception which everyone possessing a distinguished name in science or art enjoys in France. There was, in fact, no Salon in Germany. After 1830, attempts were made in Berlin to find some neutral social ground for the most eminent representatives of birth and of culture, but they were not imitated, and produced no results. In Vienna, however, there was never even an attempt made. The leading authors and painters were, at the very most, invited to the house of some intelligent or liberal banker; but they preferred meeting in a cosy coffee-house. On the other hand, as I have already stated, virtuosi were always and everywhere welcome and run after. The first to open the new era, in which a man's personality was identified with his perform-

\* From a letter "On Modern Society and Music," by H. Ehrlich.

ance, was Paganini. His extraordinary success was undoubtedly founded upon what he did, which was then something unheard of—but on the great mass of concert-goers a far deeper impression was produced by the mysterious stories of his eventful life; of the strangulation of his mistress; of the dungeon where he languished for years; and of the fiddle which had been left him, and all the strings of which snapped except one, the G string, on which he then composed those variations that made such a noise in the world. Paganini in his time very frequently protested against these fabrications; he was not a virtuoso of the present fashion, for such a one would be delighted if people would only relate similarly wonderful things about him; but Paganini's explanations, and even his appeals to his ambassador, were of no avail. Romantic poets, poetic married women, and elegant ladies and gentlemen, had made up their minds that no one could play like him, unless he had murdered his mistress; Holtei wrote of him as a "*Mann in düstere Mährchen eingehüllt*" ("A man enveloped in gloomy fables"), and, as lately as 1835, Heine, in his *Florentiner Nächte*, described him in a series of such wonderful pictures, that poor Ernst, now dead, once said to him: "If you will undertake to describe me in the same way, I too will murder some one." The least known trait in Paganini's life is also the one which is artistically the most interesting. After he had heard Berlioz's Symphony, *Episode de la Vie d'un Artiste*, and been told the composer was still a young man, in poor circumstances, he sent him 20,000 francs, a truly royal gift. The history of art does not probably contain another similar trait, and yet that trait is but little, or not at all, known.

All the triumphs of Paganini were eclipsed by those achieved ten years later by Liszt in Germany. Paganini was enveloped only in fables, but Liszt appeared in the full brilliancy of every possible kind of real adventure. When he was twenty-three years old, he was a friend of Lamartine's and Victor Hugo's, and glorified by George Sand, in her *Lettres d'un Voyageur*—Alexandre Dumas, in one of his most exciting romances, described how he had played in some drawing-room Weber's "Auforderung zum Tanze," and driven all his hearers, male and female, wild with excitement. His name was coupled with those of the most zealous socialists—an exceedingly clever lady, belonging to the best society, left her home to share his lot. He was, indisputably, the most perfect representative of the French romantic school. From the prefaces of Victor Hugo and of Lamartine, from the exciting episodes of Alfred de Musset, he had learnt the art of impressing the fashionable world, and of spurring them up to believe in Genius. I is perhaps not necessary for me to make a point of assuring those I address of my conviction that successes like Liszt's could not be achieved without unusual natural gifts; I will even add that, as a musician, Liszt stood much higher than as a concert-giver, as which alone he was known to the public; that he read the most difficult scores at sight, as a practised pianist reads an easy waltz; but I want to prove that as a concert-giver Liszt would never have attained half his success had it not been for the influence of his personality. The best proof of this is furnished by his first appearance in Vienna. He came out just at the time that Clara Wieck, Schumann's betrothed, and afterwards his wife, was the attraction of the day—her success was far greater than the most brilliant success Thalberg had ever achieved in Vienna. Her elevated tendencies are well-known; and, though at her concerts she generally produced the greatest enthusiasm by little "Etudes" of Henselt's, or Nocturnes of Chopin's, her programmes were always models of good taste. Liszt appeared, and played Weber's "*Concertstück*." The audience were uproarious, it is true, but not much more so, after all, than at many of Clara Wieck's show pieces. During the concert, however, Liszt walked among the audience, and began conversing in French with those ladies and men present whom he knew. The Viennese gazed with astonishment at the pianist, who indulged in light, easy conversation with the

proudest aristocrats. A few days afterwards a report went through the whole capital that he had replied to one of the haughtiest ladies in it, who had asked him, at table, a somewhat indelicate question as to his business success in Venice: "Madam, I cultivate music; I am not in trade."

We cannot, at the present day, form a due notion probably, of the effect of this anecdote, because many of the great virtuoso's pupils have already surpassed him in impromptu of this kind, and made up by impoliteness for what they want of his wit. Then, however, Liszt was valued as a hero who had victoriously pulled down the barriers between the artist and the higher classes. Many more interesting facts might be related concerning Liszt's subsequent career in Germany—how he frequently himself belied his immense talent, how he frequently entered the concert-room, fatigued, unstrung, and in such a state that anything like a conscientious artistic performance was out of the question, and how, despite all this, he was overwhelmed with the same applause as in his most brilliant moments. But this would take us too far.

I remarked, at the outset, that, in former times every executant was expected to do something good as a composer as well, but that, since Liszt appeared, such had ceased to be the case. Indeed, in the present state of musical execution, we can scarcely expect that any one who devotes himself to the career of a virtuoso should study composition profoundly. In order to attain the giddy height of executive skill reached by Liszt and his followers, from eight to ten hours' practice is required every day, and this, on account of the entire isolation from real life in which instrumental music moves, is decidedly more deadening in its effect than practice in any other art. It is, therefore, perfectly impossible for a musical performer, who wishes to compete with others, to preserve that purity of artistic sentiment on which so much is said and written in Germany. It is true that we never now see a new programme issued by a wandering virtuoso which does not contain classical works, side by side with all kinds of break-neck pieces of home and foreign manufacture; but the artistic feeling intended to be exhibited in these programmes reminds me of an anecdote related to me by the witty proprietor of the *Figaro*, M. de Villemessant. In April, 1848, when Paris was still revelling in the Republic, he met some literary friends in the street. These gentlemen were all delighted at the new turn in affairs, and, in their minds, perceived mankind approaching a fresh era. Villemessant, however, was of opinion that the French were too luxurious a people to bear a really free, far less a republican, constitution. "Listen," he exclaimed: "I will lay a bet that there are not five hundred republicans to be found in all Paris, and I at once propose a sure method of attesting the question: let us station ourselves at a corner of the street; I will ask, very politely, every one who passes whether he is a sincere republican; for every such one, I will pay you five francs, while for every man of a different opinion I ask you for only one franc." The strange wager was accepted, and the gentlemen, with their witnesses, posted themselves at the Café Richelieu, Boulevard des Italiens. Villemessant went up to the first passer-by, made him a polite bow, and, mentioning his own name and the names of his companions, to show they were not mere stupid jokers, enquired: "Tell me in all sincerity, sir, are you, in your heart, a republican?" "*Comment!*" bellowed the individual thus addressed, "*Liberté, égalité, fraternité, ou la mort! Vive la république!*" Villemessant took off his hat, made a low bow, and taking five francs from his pocket gave them to his opponent. A second individual now came up, and our satirist repeated his question. "My dear citizen de Villemessant," was the reply, "I am a republican, but my affairs have been in a very bad state since the introduction of the Republic, and, under the circumstances, no man can be very sincerely enthusiastic." Then came a workman. "*Citoyen ouvrier,*" said Villemessant, inquiringly, "of course you are a republican?" "Scoundrels!" answered the man, "with your Republic and your fine speeches, you

smeared our lips with honey, and now we are starving." Then came a Napoleonist, who was a republican because he would not have one of the rotten Bourbon, or Orleans lot; then a Legitimist, who was for the Republic if his Henri V. could not reign; at last Villemessant's opponents paid him one hundred francs forfeit money not to ask any more questions. I think now that if any one were to place himself upon the Virtuosi Boulevard, and ask every concert-giver, on his conscience, whether he was really as classically disposed as he strove to appear in his programmes, we might by paying every sincere lover of the Classic five francs, and claiming one franc for every one who entertained in his heart different sentiments, do a tolerably profitable stroke of business. When we hear the virtuosi of the present day first play sonatas by Beethoven, or fugues by Bach, and then their own compositions, in which they almost seem to be contending who shall carry off the prize for badness, we are reminded of those fashionable people who go into the country in summer, because it is not the correct thing to be seen in town, but who are terribly bored, and begin to live again only when they exchange forest, green sward, and real flowers, for velvet carpets, silk hangings, and the products of the artificial florist. It is unfortunately only too well-established a fact that even the greatest virtuosi, urged by the desire of showing the varied nature of their talent (that is of satisfying their vanity), have picked up the very worst things they could. Even Jenny Lind herself sung, amidst tremendous applause, at a musical festival, one of the most rapid Italian *bravura* airs ever written (and not, be it understood, one of those many sweet Italian melodies, which, when well executed exercise so magic a spell on us). A very celebrated actor, also, to whom the author of these lines ventured to remark that he ought not to play any longer a certain sentimental part; fitted only for walking gentlemen in summer travelling companies, replied very significantly: "I have no other object than to impersonate every day a different individual" (which was equivalent to saying: "the value of the piece is a secondary consideration; the first condition is that it affords me an opportunity for display.") We ask ourselves: Whither will this lead? It cannot be denied that the highest degree of executive skill is at present an indispensably necessary condition for concert-playing, and it is accounted a decided fault in a concert-player not to have attained it. But even the possession of such skill offers no longer any guarantee for its significance. In order to achieve certain and lasting success, the highest virtuosity must follow the most noble path. Joachim had succeeded in doing so. He has consistently rejected all outward glitter, and yet his fame is indisputably greater than that of any one else. Yet the stock of violin pieces for concert purposes is a much more limited one than that of pianoforte compositions, of which there is a large collection wherefrom to choose. Yet at present we hear at the public performances of pianoforte virtuosi nothing save the most difficult of Beethoven's Sonatas, and a light concerto by Mozart, but that only when the executant has composed an exceedingly difficult and brilliant *cadenza* for it. Virtuosity at present steps everywhere into the foreground, careless of the higher claims of art, and forgetful of Goethe's words:

"Vergehen werden ungebundene Geister  
Nach der Vollendung reiner Hölle streben;  
Wer Grosse will, muss sich zusammenraffen,  
In der Beschränkung, zeigt sich erst der Meister,  
Nur das Gesetz kann uns die Freiheit geben."

The virtuoso is not a free man, but a slave of the public, on whom he must keep continually exerting fresh influence by new attractions, for whom he must keep his name preserved in continuous tones, for whom he must not think of following for a time, as a man, higher aspirations, if he would not risk being forgotten as a pianist or a violinist. And what recompenses him for this feverish haste, for the constraint imposed by his everlasting speculation on pecuniary gain, to satisfy the daily increasing requirements of material life, and of his social rank, as it is called? This agreeable social position. Let us see.



### "La Grande Duchesse."

(From the Saturday Review.)

Sir John Brute, a worthy knight well known to the playgoers of the Garrick period, when Vanbrugh's *Provoked Wife* still kept possession of the stage, had an easy and convenient standard whereby to judge specimens of lyrical art. "I would not give a fig for a song that is not full of sin and impudence." So said good Sir John, applying his standard approvingly to a ditty which had just been sung by his friend Lord Rake, and which wound up with the burden, "In peace I jog on to the devil." This was the original song of the piece, and it will be found in the collected edition of Vanbrugh's works; but some acute critic seems afterwards to have discovered that it scarcely came up to the high encomium which had been passed upon it. Lord Rake indeed braved all edicts, divine and human, when he sang—

When my head's full of wine  
I o'erflow with design,  
And know no penal laws that can curb me:  
Waste'er I devise  
Seems good in my eyes,  
And religion ne'er dares to disturb me.

But though his vaunts were sinful enough in all conscience, they could scarcely be termed impudent in that popular sense of the adjective according to which it is a euphemism for a dissyllable of disreputable origin. Accordingly, in later editions of the *Provoked Wife* we find, in lieu of the old profane lay, another song so grossly indecent that, were it a new production, it could scarcely be printed now-a-days without risk of a visit from the representatives of the Society for the Suppression of Vice. The facts we have just recorded furnish a powerful answer to the often asserted theory that criticism is without practical effect on literature. The lyrics of Lord Rake were found wanting when weighed in the balance proposed in the poetics of Sir John, and were altered accordingly.

There have been times when the knight's clearly expressed canon threatened to become obsolete. The verses that were sung at Vauxhall towards the end of last century, and which, though of unmistakably Southern growth, recorded in a quasi-Scottish dialect the loves and squabbles of Jockie and Jeanie, were saucy at the best, but never impudent. Something similar may be said of the vast quantity of popular songs that cropped up during the reign of George IV., and afforded ample opportunities for the display of a certain archness proper to some of the best female vocalists of the period. Nay, at the present day, the restrictions laid by prudent mammas on the poetry sung by young ladies at the piano are so severe that love, save when it takes a perfectly harmless domestic tone, is regarded with avowed disfavor by publishers of music, cognizant of the powers by which their market is ruled. The little lyrical coquetries which would have been quite according to order forty years since would now be deemed far too demonstrative. Nevertheless, if we have any doubt that the principle of lyrical excellence laid down by Sir John Brute is widely maintained even now, we have only to cast our eyes to those places of public recreation where tastes of all kinds are gratified under the one comprehensive category of a taste for music. When our fathers flourished, songs were indeed chanted at a late hour, at the Coal-holes and Cider-cellars of the time, more beastly than anything that would be tolerated at the present day; but then it was understood that these were intended for the exclusive recreation of men of loose habits, and of the mob of greenhorns who waste their hours and health in "seeing life." To this generation in particular belongs that mass of sin and impudence nightly yelled forth at the music-halls, in the presence of persons of both sexes, including women not necessarily belonging to an abandoned class. To this generation in particular belong the vocal Lizzies, Minnies, and Nellies who seem to claim a familiarity with their hearers, and allow their portraits, radiant with immodesty, to be placarded against the walls. To this generation in particular belongs that race of quasi-male-female acrobats, who by an occasional accident gratify that latent feeling of cruelty which is so often the concomitant of licentiousness. To this generation in particular belongs the exalted patronage ostentatiously bestowed on such a work as M. Offenbach's operatic extravaganza, *La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein*.

There is no doubt that at the bottom of the importance attached to the works of this new and celebrated composer lies a strong taste for what may be mildly called the improper among the higher classes of English society. When M. Offenbach was first emerging from obscurity on the strength of the small and slight works which he composed for the newly opened Bouffes Parisiens, the whisper went abroad that in the Champs Elysées an odd but extremely

pretty little theatre had sprung up, at which pieces were performed most delightful to see and hear, but scarcely decorous enough for the English taste. The same pieces were transferred to London, and brought out at the St. James's Theatre; but they attained no great success, and it was understood that what one liked to witness in Paris, where John Bull is supposed to be out "on the loose," one did not care to behold in London. As, however, M. Offenbach expanded from a composer of operetta into a composer of what, from its dimensions at any rate, seemed entitled to be called opera, and the field of his labors was no longer the upstart Bouffes, but the time-honored Variétés, people began to name him with respect as a musical genius, whose solid worth, veiled under a gauze of frivolity, had been underrated; and a smile of grave approval was substituted for a knowing chuckle or a significant nudge in the ribs. *La Belle Helene* was pronounced a great work when properly interpreted, and greater still was *La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein*. Great also was Mlle. Schneider, whose name, by her excellent performances in both of these works, had become intimately associated with the music of the age.

As the fame of Offenbach increased, an opinion was diffused that London was in a humiliated condition. The two great lyrical works had been seen in every European capital, and the "Grand Duchess" has even found her way to New York, where, represented by Mlle. Tostie, the *prima donna* of M. Offenbach's earlier works, she was received with great delight, talking as she did in her original language. In London, indeed, English imitations of the French *chefs d'œuvre* were produced, but these were so exceedingly unprovocative of mirth, or even of cheerfulness, that people who had gone through a course of the dreary pleasantry could only marvel to hear that what seemed singularly dull on this side of the Channel was considered especially droll on the other. Their faith in M. Offenbach would probably have broken down altogether had there not been travelled friends at hand to declare how much better things were managed in France, and how the tedious burlesques which bore the title of Offenbach's books were only base copies of a genuine article. London, indeed, was the sole capital at which Offenbach had not been represented properly, and on that account might be considered a degree lower in civilization than other towns. Nevertheless, while the intellectual darkness of London was commiserated, a compliment was paid to its moral susceptibility. The old nudges and chuckles were revived, and the conjecture was hazarded that perhaps, after all, the musical dramas that find favor at the Variétés might be a trifle too free for genuine Britons. That we were averse to the illicit *liaison* as an expedient for creating a serious interest was an hypothesis too well grounded to admit of suspicion, and it was a fair inference that we should be equally nice in the article of funny improprieties.

As the establishment of the Divorce Court fearfully shook the belief in the domestic virtues, previously deemed unsullied, of the middle classes, so has the summer season, now closing, terribly enlightened us to the fastidiousness of our "Upper Ten" in the matter of public amusements. So slightly is the illicit *liaison* repugnant to the London patrons of French drama, that *Nos Intimes*, the most risky piece on the list presented by M. Felix, afforded greater satisfaction than any other work, leaving the world to wonder why an embargo had been laid on *Paul Forestier*. The dramatic portion of his season being at an end, M. Felix fills up his term by engaging Mlle. Schneider, and bringing out *La Grande Duchesse*, arousing admiration by the magnitude of his spirit and of his prices of admission. His success has been brilliant. Not only was his theatre crowded on the first night sacred to Offenbach, but the list of visitors published in the papers looked like a compressed edition of the Gotha Almanac, enriched with excerpts from the peerage. As for Mlle. Schneider, she no sooner showed her face than she was received with an enthusiasm that could not have been exceeded had a welcome to a popular sovereign newly returned from exile been the business of the occasion.

That people should be amused at the performance of *La Grande Duchesse* at the St. James's Theatre is natural enough. A subject dreadfully intelligible to the meanest adult intellect is treated with much ingenuity by the play-writer; odd figures are exhibited to the public, comic situations are brought about without any restraint caused by considerations of probability, the whole is made a vehicle for music of a taking kind, and nearly every part is well sustained—the celebrated actress, Mlle. Schneider, having been declared by the voice of Europe to be pre-eminent in the character of the Duchess. The question is, whether this is the sort of work that ought to command a general outburst of aristocratic enthusiasm, in a age when an affectation of indifference

seems to be the order of the day; whether the state of the lyrical drama which arises when the theatre most approximates to the music-hall is that which ought above all others to arouse high society from its habitual torpor.

There is, in fact, no difference between the feeling addressed years ago by the musical pieces brought out at the Bouffes, and that to which the so-called operas of the Variétés now make appeal. People will not go so far as honest Sir John Brute in professing a love for such shocking things as sin and impudence, but that a certain satisfaction at "naughtiness" is a prevailing sentiment among modern audiences of every age and both sexes is not to be doubted. Had the book of *La Grande Duchesse* been of a purely innocuous character, M. Offenbach might have worn out all the lungs and all the fiddle-strings in Christendom before his creations would have excited an iota more of enthusiasm than is produced by the ordinary entertainments in which music and extravagant drama are combined. But the story of the "Grand Duchess" is essentially naughty; the fair potentate herself is decidedly a naughty girl. She is naughty when, being a hereditary sovereign, she picks out of the ranks a strapping private, merely because, as Thackeray says of Tom Jones and his kind, he has large calves, and raises him to distinction, gloating all the while on his senseless face with the most searching expression of delight. She is naughtier still when she summons the dolt to a *tête-à-tête*, seats him on a low stool by her side, caresses him with her dainty hands, and, though she refrains from a verbal avowal of love, avows her passion by actions more expressive than words could possibly be. Indeed, whether she appears in public at the head of her army, or whether she makes one at a party of two in her boudoir, the Grand Duchess is the incarnation of every quality that distinguishes the damsel of ill-regulated mind. What is most extraordinary, the offences she commits, and at which "society" is disposed to applaud so heartily, are just of that sort of which the same "society" most violently disapproves. Many a man who would contemplate without much emotion the progress of an intrigue between a lax gentleman and a married lady, would shrink with horror from any manifestations of a love affair between a high-born lady and a private soldier. Not only morality, but the feeling for caste which keeps so many *roués* in order, is offended, unless we regard *La Grande Duchesse* as no more than a comic pantomime, and deem the lady's offences against the laws of female propriety as unreal as those of the clown against the laws of *meum and tuum*.

In the fact that *La Grande Duchesse*, ably executed, is successful, there is nothing extraordinary. The sort of success that attends it is an evil sign of the times.

### "Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg."

[From La Revue et Gazette Musicale.]

The *dramatis personæ* are the members of the corporation of *Meistersinger* in the good city of Nuremberg, towards the middle of the sixteenth century. These honest citizens inherited, and arranged after their own fashion, the noble patrimony bequeathed them by the ancient *Minnesinger*, or singers of love strains, the emulators of the French troubadours and minstrels. As a matter of course, the tradition of their aristocratic predecessors was thoroughly changed in their hands; they imprisoned art in rules and formulas without number, in order, no doubt, when they had once learnt their catechism, to compose more at their ease, behind their counter, safe from the flights of unrestrained imagination. If there is still any reference to love in their songs, it is to love of a most respectable character, love sanctified by the church, which sacred edifice it does not profane, for the *Meistersinger* held their meetings in the temples. A trial of skill between the singers is fixed for the festival of St. John; the reward of the victor is to be the hand of the beautiful Eva, daughter of Veit (or Guy) Pogner, the goldsmith. The Ritter Walther von Stolzing, a young Franconian noble, who has studied the art of poetry and song quite as much from Nature as in an old book by Walter von der Vogelweide—the last of the champions of the celebrated tournament of the Wartburg, in which Tannhäuser took a part—has been detained for some time at Nuremberg by his love for Eva. The maiden, whose heart beats in unison with his, informs him of the double obstacle to their happiness: Walther must first get admitted a *Meistersinger*, and then vanquish his rivals in the contest. *Meistersinger!* It is derogatory. What matters? Walther will solicit the honor of becoming a citizen of Nuremberg. To begin, David, the apprentice of Hans Sachs, the famous shoemaker-poet, tells him all the things he has to do: to familiarize himself with an infinite number of tones of the most absurd description, the short tone, the

long tone, the very long tone, the tone of all colors, that of the lark, that of the nightingale, that of the greenishank, that of the rainbow, that of English tin, that of the stick of cinnamon, &c., &c.; after this, he will be called upon to write a number of becoming, well rhymed verses, and then adapt a suitable melody to them. Such is the ordeal to which he will be subjected in order to be received a master.

Walther, whom Eva's confession has filled with unbounded confidence, presents himself, rather *ex abrupto*, for examination. Before the learned assembly, and in the middle of St. Catherine's church, he sings the praises of love, of profane love! He sings them, moreover, after his own fashion, that is to say, without paying the slightest attention to the rubbishy rules preserved in the statutes, but with an amount of fire and eloquence which causes the judges to tremble with holy horror. The marker of the corporation, the *Stadtschreiber*, or town-clerk, Sixtus Beckmesser an unhappy admirer of Eva's, has noted, as was his duty, the innumerable faults of the candidate; so, despite the support of Hans Sachs, who understands what he is about, and of Pogner himself, Walther is pitilessly rejected. He does not quit the place, however, without first crushing with his contempt the *Meistersinger*. This produces a certain amount of disorder, of which the apprentices of the *gai seigneur* take advantage to dance an exceedingly wild dance around the platform. The result is a first *finale*, pretty full of movement, as the reader may suppose.

The quasi-legendary figure of old Hans Sachs occupies the foreground in the last two acts. The dull-brained Beckmesser, having come at night to serenade Eva Pogner, the shoemaker's neighbor, is ridiculed by Hans Sachs, who gathers a crowd around the shivering lover, and procures him a thoroughly good cudgelling. The next day, Walther, who, despite his non-success, has spent a very quiet night, relates to his host, the poet-artisan, a charming dream he has had.—"We are saved!" exclaims Hans Sachs; "it is an excellent subject for a song, a song into which you can pour all your soul, and which, at the same time, is marvellously adapted for being treated according to the rules." He then shows the young man how to set about his work. Walther, full of ardor, has soon written three stanzas, with which not even the most exacting judges could find fault. While he goes to dress for the grand festival, which is to be public, Beckmesser arrives and sees the song; Sachs allows him to take it away, and even, if he likes, to sing it, knowing that he will only render himself ridiculous. Beckmesser is delighted, and runs off with his treasure, for he thinks the song is by Sachs, a fact which renders it of great value. The solemn moment having arrived, the Town-clerk, still quite lame, begins singing his couplet in a hoarse voice, to a barbarous melody, violating pro-ody, and distorting the words in the most absurd manner. He is greeted with shouts of derision from the initiated and the profane. "It is by Sachs," he exclaims, to be revenged. "No, it is not," says the shoemaker; "I am incapable of writing anything so beautiful. He only who has written it can, I think, sing it. Walther now advances. His pathetic accents and irreproachable execution soon call forth the applause of his audience, and the prize is unanimously awarded him. Eva places the crown of myrtle and laurel upon his victorious forehead; Pogner hangs round his neck the gold chain with three medals, the badge of the master-singers, and Hans Sachs terminates the ceremony by addressing him a few very sensible words upon the value of inspiration, and the usefulness of rules—as well as on the mission of German art, *perverted by the Gallic taste and by princes*.

Wagner was bound to finish with this touch; he did so at the dictation of Hans Sachs, who wrote *Art and Politics*.

The libretto of *Die Meistersinger* is rich in situations; the musician was doubtless satisfied with the poet, but the inexorable critic has some very grave objections to make in the name of logic and probability. At what period did that wonderful person live, that inhabitant of Nuremberg, that thoroughly-bred burgher, who put his daughter up to competition, instead of simply giving her to the man whom she loved, and whom he himself would have liked for a son-in-law? But, on the other hand, had Pogner behaved thus reasonably, there would have been no *Meistersinger*, and we should, no doubt, have had to wait a long time before knowing how Wagner represented fun. The second act, which lays entirely in the street where Pogner and Hans Sachs reside, is filled up with scenes of which the utility may be strongly questioned. If it had been relieved of these incumbrances, and if the author could have included in it some of the superfluous matter in the third act, which is far from being deficient in interest, but which lasts nearly two hours, a healthy equilibrium would have been established, and the public would

have been spared an amount of physical fatigue which cannot fail to exert some influence upon their impressions.

Wagner's comicality is neither the *marivaudage* of most of our comic operas, nor the absurd farcical stuff which has usurped the name of buffo opera; it is the high class gaiety of Shakespeare and Molière, without the coarse expressions. The scene in which Beckmesser receives striking marks of the indignation felt by the citizens who have been disturbed in their sleep, excited, at the performance, Homeric laughter. But, during all the noise, where can have been the watchman, who appears, half asleep, at the end of the act, when perfect order has been restored, simply to draw out his monotonous cry? The fourth scene of the second act, between Hans Sachs and Eva, is treated with considerable delicacy, though it is too long. As for Walther whom the author has charged with expounding his own ideas upon the renovation of art, he would never think of joking; he is enthusiastic, full of passion, sometimes grave, and never quitting the Lydian Mode.

The musical plan followed by Wagner in his new work differs a little from that pursued in *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, and *Tristan*, but not so much as the title of comic opera would lead us to believe. There is no characteristic phase announcing each personage; there are some passages with a bold frank rhythm, and some perfect cadences, though these latter are, it is true, very rare, but there is everywhere about the same amount of "endless music," without any palpable form; harmony as little natural as possible, and which frequently defies analysis; periods without any termination, an entanglement of the various points resembling counterpoint caricatured—and then, suddenly, in the midst of all this chaos, a charmingly clear passage or so, or a powerful idea grandly expressed.

In all this we search in vain for an opportunity of exercising that facility of comprehension, which, according to Wagner himself, ought to be one of the principal conditions of the Beautiful in a dramatic work; as to the quality most nearly related to it, namely simplicity, it is entirely out of the question—the adepts of the new school would laugh in our very faces at the idea of such a thing—as is also unity, removed, as they are at the present day from the pedestal on which Winkelmann had placed them. It is upon other bases, more solid without doubt, that the new system of aesthetics is established. It happens, however, that exactly the very passages in which the Beautiful bursts forth in Wagner's work, are those where, escaping from the restraint which he has imposed upon himself, he condescends to remain within reach of those simple persons who have learnt to feel in the school of Beethoven and of Weber; for instance, the finales of the first and third acts of *Lohengrin*, the marriage march, the air of Lohengrin on his departure, many passages in *Tannhäuser*, &c. If the avowed object of the innovators is to democratize art, will they not attain that object more easily by the above pieces, to which Wagner perhaps attaches only trifling importance, than by the vague echoes of the "melody of the forest?" The master's disciples will certainly reply, like Liszt, that one must be specially gifted to appreciate beauties of this description—and that they are so gifted. To this there is no answer, without continually turning in a circle.

The prelude to *Die Meistersinger* is more developed than, but very inferior to, that of *Lohengrin*. It is built upon the motive sung by Pogner in the first act where he declares his intention of giving his daughter to the victor in the tourney. "Ein Meistersinger muss es sein," taken up again by Walther, in the fifth scene of the second act, and on the march which accompanies the entrance of the master-singers. The scene of the meeting in the church and Walther's song in the first act, the scene between Hans Sachs and Eva, the serenade, in which Beckmesser, strumming on his lute, despatches his sighs and amorous hiccoughs to Eva's maid, disguised in her mistress's garments, and the *finale* to the second act; Walther's dream, which he will repeat subsequently at the public meeting, in the second tableau of the third act; the waltz movement towards the beginning of the last *finale*, and the entire scene of the competition, may be cited as the principal pages of the score. The two melodies sung by Walther, at each of his ordeals before the master-singers, are charming, and atone for very many errors in taste.

I shall have doubtless to modify my first impression, for it is impossible for any one to decide at once on the bearing of a work by Wagner. From my present views, however, hasty as they are, I arrive at the conviction that comic opera has nothing to gain from being transported to this ground, if its name and character are to be preserved, unless we would end in a hybrid production in which all styles shall be united, as perhaps we may do at no distant period.

## Mendelssohn.—Lind.—Ertmann.—Beethoven.

Here is an unpublished letter from Mendelssohn to the Baroness von Ertmann, communicated, with explanations, to a European journal, by Sig. S. C. Marchesi:

Leipsic, the 12th April, 1846.

"My dear and respected Baroness,—Since those never-to-be-forgotten days, which I passed in Milan, I have not written to you, and probably you scarcely know how profound and unchangeable my gratitude for you has become in my heart. Few days have passed since then, without my thinking often and long of your kindness and friendliness, and again thanking you for the same. I had my share of all the good and loveable things I since heard about your life, though I was compelled to be far away and remain silent. To-day, after so many years, an opportunity has at length presented itself for writing to you, and I cannot let it escape me, since I know that my writing will afford you gratification.

"The fact is my friend Jenny Lind is going to Vienna, and I should like you to become acquainted with each other, for I never, in the whole course of my existence, met a more noble, more genuine, and more sincere artist, and I also know one thing: that nothing could give you greater pleasure than to make the acquaintance of such an artist. Had she ever sung you a little song, or executed a grand air, I should not require to say any more; you will hear her, and, consequently, I do not add another word.

"I must now beg that you, too, will sometimes kindly give me a place for a moment in your memory. The hours passed in your house were indeed delightful! If you should desire further details of my sayings and doings, Mlle. Lind is the very best person to tell you all about them, for I have seen her very often, and she knows everything concerning me and mine.

"May I beg that you will not doubt the unchangeable attachment and heartfelt gratitude with which I am, and shall be as long as I live, your most devoted

FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLODY."

The above letter from Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy to the Baroness Ertmann,\* was written at the time Jenny Lind was about to make her first appearance in the Imperial city. It is interesting to learn from it what a high opinion Mendelssohn entertained of Jenny Lind, and what respect he had for the Baroness Ertmann, whose acquaintance he made in Milan.

As this lady was not merely a distinguished pianoforte player, but, for a long series of years, the friend and patroness of Beethoven, we here append a biographical sketch of her.

Dorothea, Baroness Ertmann, was born at Offenbach, near Frankfurt-on-the-Maine, where her father, a rich manufacturer resided. From her earliest girlhood, she exhibited an extraordinary talent for music; but as, when a child, she found the first lessons very distasteful, she was frequently tied by her mother to the music-stool, which she often recollected afterwards with a thankful heart. When eighteen, she married the Baron von Ertmann, a captain in the Austrian service, who died as Lieutenant Field-Marshal at Milan.

During her residence in Vienna, where she lived several years, the Baroness Ertmann became accidentally acquainted with Beethoven. She happened to meet him in the shop of Herr Haslinger, the music-publisher, who had shown her some Sonatas of Beethoven's which had just appeared, remarking, as he did so, that they were very beautiful, but that they had many opponents. The Baroness immediately proceeded into a room adjoining the shop, played the Sonatas through with a practised hand, and loudly expressed her rapture at them. She had scarcely concluded speaking, ere a young man of bashful appearance went up to her and introduced himself as the composer. From that moment Beethoven was a daily visitor of her family. He himself taught her how to play all his Sonatas, and she never tired of relating how strict he was, and how often he used to place his arm upon her hands, while she was playing, so that she might not move them about too much.

The Baroness Ertmann soon found how difficult Beethoven was to manage, but she bore patiently his whims and caprices, perceiving how unhappy he often felt. His absence of mind went frequently so far that, during dinner, he would complain of want of appetite, suddenly leave off eating, and then, for the first time, remember that he had already dined. He used to call the Baroness his St. Cecilia, saying she was the only person who understood him and his

\* Her maiden name was Graumann. She was aunt of Mme. Marchesi, also once Mlle. Graumann, and wife of Prof. Marchesi.

† See Mendelssohn's Letters, vol. I.



music. This did not prevent him from giving way to outbursts of feeling with her as with other persons, and avoiding her house for weeks together. He would then return, hold out his hand to her without pronouncing a word, and peace was concluded.

When the Baroness had the misfortune to lose her last child, Beethoven was the only person who did not express his condolence with her under the calamity. After the lapse of several weeks, however, he called. Without uttering a word, he proceeded to the piano, making a gesture of invitation for the Baroness to go and sit next him. He played and extemporized. "Such music," said the Baroness, "I had never heard! What he wished to express by it was the death of the child, and the joy of the angels, who greeted its pure soul in Heaven!"

When he had concluded, he was not able to speak for weeping, and left the room. It was not until afterwards that he could tell the Baroness what he had then felt.

As we know, Beethoven dedicated to the Baroness Ertmann his Sonata, Op. 101, in A major. Among the Baroness's papers, after her death, were all Beethoven's Sonatas, with observations written in his own hand.

## Music Abroad.

### London.

MR. CHARLES HALLÉ has terminated his very interesting recitals in St. James's Hall. In the course of eight performances he has done exactly what he promised. He has played all the known, or at any rate, all the published, sonatas of Schubert, besides the large number of his minor pieces; he has given, besides, almost every one of the variations, *rondos*, *bagatelles*, and other fugitive pianoforte compositions of Beethoven upon which he could readily lay hands. These he has played in such a manner as to show how carefully and conscientiously he must have studied them. In the programme of the eighth and last recital were comprised the two great sonatas of Schubert in A and B flat, belonging to the last set of three (which Schumann could not believe to be the last); and most interesting, because hitherto unknown, the *Fünf Clavierstücke*, which though published as independent pieces, have evidently a close connection with each other, and (four of the five at any rate) were in all likelihood intended to form part of another sonata. These are, without exception, ingenious, original, and charming. The eighth recital only included one specimen of Beethoven—the pleasing variations on a theme in G major; all the rest of the programme (even the vocal pieces sung by Herr Wallenreiter) being taken from Schubert.—*Times*.

**PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS.**—The (old) Philharmonic Society has given (in the Hanover Square Rooms) its antepenultimate and penultimate concerts. At the antepenultimate the symphonies were Mozart's in D (with the minuet) and Beethoven's in C minor—both well played under the intelligent direction of Mr. Cusins. The overtures were the so-called "Trumpet Overture," in C, of Mendelssohn, for the possession of which the musical world is so recently indebted to the illustrious musician's surviving relatives, and that to *Rosenwald*, an unpublished opera by Mr. C. Lucas, Philharmonic director, late Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, and one of our most learned and excellent professors. The overture to *Rosenwald*, written and scored as only a genuine master could have written and scored it, is full of life and vigor—such a capital orchestral piece, in short, as deserves a more frequent hearing at the Philharmonic and other concerts of high pretensions. Of Mendelssohn's "Trumpet Overture" we need say no more than that it improves on every hearing. The concerto on this occasion was that of Schumann in A minor, for pianoforte, the pianist being Herr Rubinstein, who, as is his custom, gave a reading of his own—a reading, we may say, essentially differing from that of Mme. Schumann, who, after all, ought to be accepted as a fair judge of what her late husband intended, and the more so inasmuch as this same concerto was composed expressly for her. But Herr Rubinstein is impetuous, and has a way of his own, which he can hardly be blamed for following when such applause is bestowed upon him as he earned by what we cannot conscientiously assert to have been a genuine reading of Schumann's interesting, though laboriously over-wrought composition. The same applause, however, or something nearly akin to it, followed Herr Rubinstein's execution of the "Air Varié" from Handel's *Suite de Pièces* in D minor, the greater portion of which, to our thinking, was no better than caricature. But that a majority of the audience were not of the same opinion was

proved by the fact that Herr Rubinstein was called back, and, in return for the honor, treated his admirers to his own pianoforte arrangement of the quick march from *The Ruins of Athens* of Beethoven—an exhibition, *sui generis*, unique. The singers at this concert were Mlle. Tietjens and Herr Rokitsansky; and not by any means the least interesting feature of the programme was the *scena*, "Infelice," composed by Mendelssohn, expressly for the Philharmonic Society, as far back as 1834—of which Mlle. Tietjens gave the original version (it is published with a new last movement) superbly. At the seventh concert there was only one symphony—the "Pastoral Symphony" of Beethoven; but, as compensation, there were two concertos. The first concerto, composed M. Beseirsky, a new violinist from Moscow, was given *con amore* by the author and much applauded. The other, Professor Sterndale Bennett's fourth for pianoforte (in F minor), one of the most magnificent pieces of its kind ever written for the instrument, was undertaken by Madame Goddard, who, on various occasions, has played both this and other concertos of Professor Bennett, at the Philharmonic Concerts and elsewhere, and but for whom, indeed, now that their composer, one of the greatest pianists of his time, has ceased to appear in public, they would, in all probability, never be heard at all—odd enough, considering the enthusiasm with which they never fail to be received. True, they are not over easy to execute. The overtures at this concert were *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Mendelssohn) and *Jessonda* (Spohr). The singers were Mmes. Sinico and Demeiric Lablache, from Her Majesty's Opera.—*Ibid*.

Here is the programme of the 8th and "ultimate" concert. The singers were Mlle. Nilsson, Mme. Trebelli-Bettini and her husband; the solo violinist Herr Strauss, whose playing the *Times* admires, but not Bruch's Concerto; the Mendelssohn Concerto was played by Herr Lubeck, of whom the *Times* cannot speak in terms of praise.

Symphony in C ("La danse des ours").....Haydn.  
Aria, "Il mio tesoro" ("Don Giovanni").....Mozart.  
Concerto for Violin (first time of performance in England).....Max Bruch.  
Romance, "Ya, dit-elle" (Robert le Diable).....Meyerbeer.  
New Overture (MS.), "La selva incantata".....Benedict.  
Symphony in F, No. 8.....Beethoven.  
Cavatina, "Or, la sull' onda" ("Il Giuramento").....Mercadante.  
Concerto, No. 2, in D minor, Pianoforte.....Mendelssohn.  
Chanson des Djins, "Le premier jour de Bonheur".....Auber.  
Swedish Song.  
Overture, composed for the Exhibition of 1862.....Auber.

There was still a post-ultimate, or "complimentary" concert, at which, the *Times* says:

We had very admirable performances of Mozart's "Jupiter" and Mendelssohn's "Italian" symphonies, Weber's *Jubilee* overture, and Professor Sterndale Bennett's so-called "Fantasia-Overture," descriptive of *Paradise and the Peri*, composed expressly for the society, and first executed at its "Jubilee" concert in 1862. Why this last should be designated "Fantasia Overture," we are at a loss to explain, seeing that a more beautifully symmetrical piece of music hardly exists. The applause at the end was loud, unanimous, and prolonged; but nothing could induce the composer to come forward and acknowledge it, although it was pretty generally known that he was in the room. Mr. Charles Hallé treated the audience to a remarkably fine performance of Beethoven's fourth pianoforte concerto (in G), with Beethoven's own cadenzas, which henceforth, it is to be hoped, will invariably be used, unless some new Mendelssohn should appear to extemporize better ones. The singing was excellent. Mr. Santley gave, in his most finished style, the now well-known air from the *Resurrezione* of Handel, as well as a romance from Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*. Mlle. Trebelli-Bettini (in place of Mlle. Tietjens who was indisposed), sang "Di tanti palpiti," and another air; while Christine Nilsson, for whom an apology was made early in the evening, sang Beethoven's magnificent "Ah! perfido," in a style that we have never heard surpassed.

**ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.**—On Saturday (July 11) the *Barbiere* (Patti and Mario).

On Monday, *Faust* (Mlle. Vanzini and Naudin— in lieu of the *Africaine*, put off on account of the illness of Mme. Rey-Balla).

On Tuesday, *Romeo e Giulietta* (Patti and Mario)—last time this season.

On Wednesday, *Rigoletto* (Vanzini and Chelli—his second appearance)—last time this season.

On Friday, *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Fricci, Vanzini, Graziani, and Fancelli—as the Duke)—in place of *La Sonnambula*, Mlle. Patti being indisposed.

To-night, *La Figlia del Reggimento* (Patti)—last time this season.

**HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.**—On Saturday, *Faust* (Nilsson and Firensi).

On Monday, *Il Trovatore* (Tietjens, Mongini, Santley, Trebelli), for the benefit of Signor Mongini—first time.

On Tuesday, *Lucia* (Nilsson).

On Wednesday (Mr. Mapleson's benefit at the Crystal Palace), a grand concert and *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Tietjens, Nilsson, Kellogg, Trebelli, Santley, Gassier, &c.).

On Thursday, *Don Giovanni* (Tietjens, Nilsson, Kellogg, Santley, Fiorini, Bettini, &c.).

To-night, (July 18) *Il Flauto Magico*—first time.

**A CONCERT BY BLIND BOYS.**—At the first annual speech day of the Worcester College for the blind sons of gentlemen, a selection of music was performed by the pupils, in a style which reflected the highest credit on their instructors, Messrs. Done and Hughes. We subjoin the programme, several items in which prove that the teachers are men who appreciate the classical style, and that the pupils must be of at least equal intelligence with those who "have eyes":—Duet, pianoforte, overture to *Egmont*, Beethoven; solos, pianoforte, "Nightingale Quadrilles," Lemoine; solo, pianoforte, *Lieder ohne Worte*, Book 1, No. 1. Mendelsohn; solo, pianoforte, Sonata in E flat, Op. 11. Clementi; solo, pianoforte, Sonata in F, Op. 12. Mozart; part-song, "The Hardy Norseman," Pearsall; concerto, pianoforte, "Consolation," in B flat, Dussek. It would be difficult to find an ordinary grammar school, which could provide a similar entertainment.—*The Choir*.

### Paris.

On Tuesday the Concours du Chant was held at the Conservatoire, and was upon this occasion distinguished by the absence of female talent. The jury (composed of Auber, president, Ambroise Thomas, Benoist, Victor Massé, Pasdeloup, Eugène Gautier, Achard, Léo Delibes, and Wekerlin) could not deem any fair pupil worthy of the first prize; and the second was divided between Mlles. Baskowska, a youthful Polish (pupil of M. Révial), De Lausnay, Laget, Moisset, Gilbert, and Guillot. The first-named promises great things. She gave an air from "*I Puritani*" with considerable finish and effect. The last-named (Mlle. Guillot, pupil of Massé) created a very marked impression by her rendering of Auber's air of the *Concert à la Cour*.

The male concurrents numbered nineteen. The two who obtained first prizes were MM. Aubéry (pupil of Vauthrot) and Solon (pupil of Battaille). The second prize was obtained by Mr. Nicot, whose air from the "*Barbiere*" was given in a way that promised a future addition to the staff of the Opera Comique of considerably more than average ability.

At the Variétés a grand revival has taken place. The "*Belle Helene*" has re-appeared, with no Schneider and no Dupins. The *Châtelet* is playing the "*Forty Thieves*," and the Opera is doing the "*Trovatore*." Mlle. J. Hisson is the *Leonora*, and is very much talked about in musical circles here. She has just accepted a four years' engagement at the Opera at the progressive salary of 11,000 frs, 18,000, 25,000, and 30,000 francs per annum for the four years.

A short time since I was told by a musical acquaintance that Verdi is working hard at a new work speedily to be produced, called "*Falstaff*." I see the rumor confirmed in one of the daily papers here. (The name is written *Falstaff* by the way.)—*Corr. Orchestra*, July 22.

**COLOGNE.**—Thus writes one of the London *Musical World's* masquerading correspondents:

The next novelty at our Sommer theatre will be the *Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*, represented by the charming Fraulein Fischer from Vienna. Our Conservatoire is going to lose the Marchesi. After an absence of seven years, Mme. de Marchesi has received the flattering invitation to resume her ancient position of first singing mistress at the Conservatoire of Vienna. Therefore she will leave Cologne on September next, and settle once more in the Austrian capital. Signor de Marchesi has accepted the position as professor for the superior singing classes for ladies and gentlemen at the Conservatoire of Cologne, but only until April, 1869, when he will also go to Vienna. Mr. Ullmann has just discovered a new prominent musical star in Vienna: a young and handsome Hungarian, possessing a splendid Soprano, and being highly gifted. This future musical celebrity has been confided to the tuition and care of Mme. de Marchesi in Cologne. On the occasion of the 80 years jubilee of the University of Bonn, which will take place on the third of August next, a great Cantata for solos, chorus, Orchestra and Organ, expressly composed by F. Hiller, will be executed in

the Cathedral of the Said Town, under the direction of the Composer. The great *Fete*, which will last three days, promises to be a very brilliant one. More than 600 Professors, and Doctors from the different Universities of Germany are invited, and the Prince of Prussia will preside at the meetings.

Yours faithfully,  
SALVATORE SAVERIO BALDASSARE.

PESTH.—Herr A. von Adelburg's opera, *Zrinyi*, lately produced with marked success, continues to increase in public favor. The local critics are unanimous in their praise of it.

BRESLAU.—The members of the Singacademie gave a special performance, under the direction of Herr Zul. Schäffer, their conductor, on the 2nd inst., to celebrate the forty-third anniversary of the institution. Among the pieces included in the programme were the motet *a capella*, "Sicut cervus," Palestrina; the "Misericordias Domini," Mozart, and the "Kyrie," "Gloria," "Sanctus," "Benedictus," and "Agnus," from Beethoven's C major mass.

INNSBRUCK.—A performance of Beethoven's C major mass, and Handel's *Sampson*, will shortly be given to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Musikverein.

STUTTGART.—The members of the Association for Classical Sacred Music recently gave a performance of Handel's *Athalia*.

MUNICH.—The second performance of *Die Meistersinger* was not given till the 28th June, just a week after the first, as both Herr Betz and Herr Hölzel were too fatigued to appear again sooner. The composer himself vanished mysteriously immediately after the first performance; a great many reasons are assigned for this sudden flight, which is probably connected in some way with the fact of his bowing from the King's box. It would be entertaining a very incorrect notion of the power and sentiments of the court party and feudal nobility to suppose that such an act would be allowed to remain unpunished. Wagner has, however, not gone to Dresden, where he was expected, but returned to Lucerne, to do something more to his grand work, *Die Nibelungen*. Herr Wagner's opponents have been accused of being too lavish in their blame, but in the way of praise, it would be difficult to surpass Herr Cornelius, when he says in the *Süddeutsche Presse*: "The orchestra on the score of *Die Meistersinger* contains a large abundance of unusual combinations of color: each twitching of the eyebrow, each movement of the hand, whether to threaten or to beckon, is portrayed in an unmistakable manner." We cannot understand how a man can write such rubbish, and can only say to the founder of the School of the Future observes the *Berlin Echo*: Heaven preserve thee from thy friends!—A new caricature has excited a good deal of attention lately. It represents a splendid private box, decorated with princely emblems. In which theatre the box is situated the reader will easily guess. The two occupants of it, the one an aristocratic looking young man, and the other a plebeian individual with a face like a Saxon weaver's, are fighting for the front place. Underneath is the well-known classic line: "Es soll der König mit dem Sänger gehen" ("The King shall associate with the poet").—A new three-act comic opera, *Der Rothmantel*, by Herr Krempelzelzer, has been accepted.

MME. VIARDOT'S LAST OPERA, "The Ogre," was recently performed at Baden to an audience of not more than thirty persons. These persons, however, were made up of Queens, Grand Duchesses, Princes, and Princesses; so that quantity was replaced by quality. The writer of the libretto played the principal character (non-singing). Mme. Viardot played the Prince lover, the prima donna was Mlle. Bailiodz of Breslau, a pupil of the composer, and Mme. Viardot's daughters Claudie et Marianne, and her son Paul (buffo) played the other characters. M. Eckert, Kapellmeister of Stuttgart, presided at the piano, and M. Louis Viardot was the prompter. The opera, founded on the well-known fairy story, is characterized as enchanting, full of graceful melodies and fine harmony, perfectly written for the voice, as pleasant to sing as to hear, and is very novel, inasmuch as there is neither tenor, baritone, bass, nor male chorus. The female chorus is sung by eleven young ladies, all pupils of Mme. Viardot, and the success of the work most complete. There are fifteen numbers, and among them are specially signalized, a grand duet, two charming romances—one with violin obbligato—a drinking song, and some excellent choruses in four parts. Marked improvement was observable on the two previous operas of the fair composer, and it is hoped the theatre projected for Mme. Viardot will soon be completed, so as to afford a wider scope for her talent.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, AUGUST 15, 1868.

### Wagner's "Meistersinger."

Having copied, in our last, an unfavorable German criticism—exaggerated, very likely, through its English medium—we now translate from *Le Menestrel* a portion of the report of one of Wagner's French admirers. At the same time, for the clearer understanding of the very interesting plot and incident of Wagner's comic opera, we have transferred to an earlier page of to-day's *Journal* the larger part of the article in *La Revue et Gazette Musicale*, which we find translated to our hand in the *London Musical World*. The musical journals, German, French and English, are full of the *Meistersinger*. The majority condemn; but there are also strenuous advocates. One, in the Leipzig *Neue Zeitschrift*, has commenced a metaphysical, "world-historical," transcendental-aesthetic exposition of its beauties and deep meanings. He begins with the imposing observation: "The poetical creations (*Dichtungen*—probably meaning poetry and music) of Richard Wagner are the ideal expression of the world-historical strivings of our whole age." (!) And then he proceeds to show why it was necessary to Wagner, as the ideal exponent of the whole modern German development, to write also a comic opera. Perhaps we shall one day attempt some abstract of his argument; but now it is our Frenchman's turn.

"First, the libretto. This time Wagner has broken with his own peculiar dramatic conditions. Here we are far away from sirens and the pagan pleasures of the Venusberg; we have no knight in white tunic and coat of glittering mail descending on his legendary swan from the celestial heights of the Holy Graal, as in *Lohengrin*: the philtres, the despairing loves, the aspirations to night, to annihilation, in short all the enervating Buddhism of *Tristan and Isolde*, equally, have disappeared. The action passes in a time and place, not very familiar to us, it is true,—in the imperial city of Nuremberg, toward the middle of the 16th century;—but we find there at least our own instincts, our sentiments, our passions; we feel our humanity palpitate and live there."

"I cannot explain to myself the severe criticisms which have been passed on this libretto,—some going so far as to call it *deplorable*. . . The economy of the action rests on three principal elements, combined with a rare skill (at least in my humble opinion), which are: 1. the sentimental element—the love of Walther and Eva, protected by Hans Sachs; 2. the comic element—the buffooneries of Sixtus Beckmesser, his grotesque lyrical orthodoxy, and his more grotesque passion for Eva, which singularly enliven the three great scenes of the examination, in the first act, the serenade and the squabble in the second, and the final competition in the third; 3. the pompous element, which has its place in the first act—the scene of the solemn assembly of the *Meistersingers* and the finale—again in the third, the ceremony of the competition, which fills entirely the last tableau, and of which the principal motives are reproduced in the overture.

"To be sure, certain parts of the book are open

to criticism. Especially the scene, in the first act, where Pogner solemnly announces to the assembled corporation that he will give his daughter in marriage to the hero of the approaching *concours*. Here the master jeweller exhausts your patience by the interminable considerations into which he enters. No doubt the piece is very interesting, musically; but, heavens! how garrulous the good man is!

"It is a strange and inexplicable thing:—Wagner in the composition of his operas pre-occupies himself with everything; not a detail of execution escapes his attention; he goes so far as to indicate in what way, slowly or rapidly, the curtain is to fall at the end of each act. And yet this man so minute in all things, this poet, this musician, who sacrifices so much to the logic, to the truth of situations, still goes astray like a novice in developments the necessity of which absolutely escapes the spectator. And observe, it is impossible to charge this, in the usual way, upon the musician alone; for we know that, in Wagner's operas, the librettist and the composer always march along together."

"Let us look now at the score. . . First, the overture. This magnificent symphonic piece has a considerable importance, not by its length—the overture to *Tannhäuser* is longer,—but because it bears a brilliant and complete reflex of the work to which it serves as a majestic frontispiece.

"The first movement (in C major) of this overture is the entire reproduction of the solemn march beginning the scene of the competition on St. John's day, in the fourth and last tableau. This march, of a large style, of a proud and powerful gait, is accompanied by a well sustained counterpoint, on which the principal motive seems to rest as upon formidable underpinnings. Already you feel transported into the midst of old Franconia: you behold the procession of grave deans of the master-singers, rigid guardians of the secular traditions of the corporation. This imposing page bears no resemblance to the marches of *Tannhäuser* and of *Lohengrin*. But it is enough to have ever heard the *Huldigungs-Marsch* (march of homage) of the same author, dedicated to the young king of Bavaria, and composed four years ago, to be convinced that the last tableau of the *Meistersinger* was finished but a short time before Wagner addressed this homage to his royal protector.

"In this overture, a little before the appearance of the second theme,—which will be the triumphal piece of Walther,—we remark a superb peroration of the march: here the phrase, pursuing its ascending movement and enlarging more and more, with a rhythm which accentuates itself in the same proportion, is in some sort spurred on by a succession of *retards* and of *major and minor sevenths*; then, as the culminating point of the phrase approaches, the instrumental sonority increases in intensity, until the terminal cadence is achieved upon a trill of extraordinary vehemence and effect. This ascending phrase is a song of sublime enthusiasm; it is the word of Faust:

"Come, lift thyself to loftier spheres."

"After this musical episode, of incomparably bold and powerful cast, we quit for sometime the luminous spaces to which the composer had transported us; at this moment the chief of the orches-



tra must redouble his vigilance and precision, while the hearer will lend his whole attention to what is about to rise from the orchestral depths. I will say more: if you have not an ear somewhat musical, you must resign yourself to seize but very imperfectly, the first time at least, the curious dialogue which is preparing: for two themes, very different, are about to appear simultaneously, to develop themselves in continual interlacings. The first of these themes is the air which Walther will sing in the final competition, and which will win him at once the victor's crown and the hand of Eva. The second theme, by an original choice, is on the contrary the piece with which Walther is to make a failure in his first examination.

"After this dialogue, which is prolonged through 25 measures, the picture changes anew: the first motive in C major re-appears in the key of E flat, in the form of a fugue this time, and intermingled here and there with reminiscences of the preceding dialogue. We are in the heat of the overture; by these short fragments of themes, which rise and are swept away in the movement of the fugue, by the roaring *crescendo*, by the rhythms choking one another with an ever growing impetuosity, we feel a near explosion. In fact at the end of thirty measures of this unbridled course, a *fortissimo* bursts out on the chord of the dominant seventh of the key of G major, a chord spread out over the whole orchestral scale, minus the basses which hold out a pedal *sol* to bring back the primitive key of C major, at the end of a *diminuendo* reminding us of that which precedes the return of the chorus of pilgrims at the end of the *Tannhäuser* overture. Finally we reach the *coda*, where all the themes and rhythms hitherto employed are reproduced. This *coda*, which begins, *pianissimo*, with the triumphal air of Walther, to terminate, in the *tutti*, with the march of the commencement, is a monumental page. [How long before our American newspaper critics will be affecting this fine French phrase? *une page monumentale*!] Here we find again, at the moment of the final *fortissimo*, the famous trill of which I have just spoken, and which now blossoms out climbing the degrees of the major chord of the ninth. I do not fear to compare this last part of the overture of the *Meistersinger* to the march finale of Beethoven's C-minor Symphony. [!] It is prodigiously fine [as the boys say, "immense!"]

"As I have said, this overture, by the exposition of its themes and its symphonic processes, is, in the precise sense of the term, a complete preface to the score; this must explain the length of my remarks upon it. I shall now limit myself to the general traits of the three acts which follow.

"In Act I, I will specify the chorus of pupils of the corporation, who are surmising, with the petulant gayety of their age, the probable results of the examination of Walther. It has a charming youthfulness and vivacity. One asks, in hearing this chorus, sparkling with verve, if it be indeed the author of *Tristan* who has written these motives so fresh and alert.—Then comes the scene of the Master Singers, solemnly convened to hear the declaration of the jeweller Pogner relating to the marriage of his daughter Eva.—In speaking of the libretto, I expressed regret that the good man should make so much ceremony in announcing his resolution. But if we forget the

jeweller for an instant, and only listen to the delicious babble of the orchestra,—and above all to the elegant arabesque of the violins,—we shall pardon father Pogner his interminable reflexions.

"But here we have, soon after, the melodic pearl of the first act. It is the romance of Walther: "*Am stillen Herd*" (At the still fireside). I know nothing sweeter or more exquisite than this phrase; never, in the soft and melancholy kind, has Wagner written anything equal to it. Moreover, the whole following scene, which is but the development of this same phrase, is a pure chef-d'œuvre; it would, I am sure, disarm Wagner's fiercest adversaries.

"I might say as much of the examination scene and the finale of the first act, but for the excessive length of these pieces. Yet there is here too a superb *crescendo*: Walther, furious at the criticisms of Sextus Beckmesser on his trial piece, becomes a butt to the raillery of the pupils. Convinced of the merit of his piece, he resumes the motive thereof in a tone more and more animated, while the young people, also resuming their characteristic chorus, laugh more and more loudly at the protestations of the knight.—I hardly need to add, with a single reservation on the score of length, that this ensemble piece, in which the master-singers take part in turn, is treated with a master hand.

"If most of the scenes of Act II were kept within the limits of their relative importance, I should see nothing, absolutely nothing there to find fault with. Indeed, if I should only listen to my predilections as a musician, and give myself up to the constant charm of this symphony of an hour, in which all chords vibrate in their turn, I believe I should accept this second Act just as it is. At all events, it would be necessary to cite as finished pages the duo of Eva and Hans Sachs, and the chorus of the quarrel. Melody, harmony, dialogue of voices and instruments, the duo of Eva and Sachs is one enchantment, one caress from beginning to end. As to the chorus of the dispute, I regard it as a marvel of musical realism; nothing is wanting there, not even the cries of alarm of the Nuremberg women, which cries are heard, in the heat of the *melée*, under the form of a very high *pedal note*. All this is prodigious, without precedent. But if, as I have elsewhere said, the execution of the overture is only possible to a few orchestras, I see still fewer theatres whose choral *personnel* is in a condition to confront this terrible scene; for should the execution fail in any point whatever, I can promise you the most frightful cacophony that ever caused a deaf man's hair to stand on end. Wagner was admirably seconded in a task of such immense hardihood by the artists of the royal theatre of Munich; gesticulating and wrestling together with an exemplary *furia*, they sing with an incredible *aplomb* and certainty.

"It is in the first tableau of Act III that Sachs relates his dream to Walther. In this same tableau we remark, besides a very beautiful quatuor, the scene of the lesson given by Sachs to Walther, to prepare him for the *concours* of St. John's day. The principal phrase of this duo,—the same to which I have alluded in the overture—is very beautiful no doubt; but one is at a loss to account for its multiplied repetitions, seeing that it is to reappear in the following tableau, the ceremony of the *concours*, sung at first by Walther, and then by the final chorus. I admit that a

lesson of such importance could not be given in a turn of the hand; but it seems as if the author might have varied more the melodic elements of this scene, the length of which is anyhow excessive.

"With the exception of a chorus written in the style of the purest compositions of Bach and Handel, this last tableau reproduces, with the developments that befit the addition of the vocal mass, the themes already heard, that is to say the grand march of the overture and the air of Walther's lesson.

"I will not close without one last glance at this score, in order to show that Wagner has not modified his style so radically as has been said.

"The truth is that, in the *Meistersinger*, Wagner, evidently induced by the nature of a subject which keeps itself almost always in the full light and in the temperate zones of passion, has modified a little his harmonic processes. No longer dealing with the heart-rending loves of Tristan and Isolde, he shows more sobriety in the matter of dissonances, more precision in his rhythms, and less frequent fluctuations of key, than in *Tristan*.

"But the fundamental principles adopted by Wagner for the conception of his lyrical dramas have not varied; only, I repeat, the means have changed, and hence the salutary influences which I have mentioned on the mind of the musician. The principle of unity at whatsoever cost, absolute unity, has still prevailed in many scenes of this work, where the singers, the persons, have no musical relief except some instrument or other of the orchestra. To my mind, this is an error; it is just here that the new opera of Wagner is still somewhat open to criticism, which does not understand that the singer, the individual rôle should be always absorbed in the ensemble. Yet it is just to add that what was almost the rule in *Tristan*, has become the exception in the *Meistersinger*.

"And now, to sum up my opinion on this last work, I will say this: If the finale of the 3d act of *Tristan*, the scene of the transfiguration and the death of Isolde, did not exist, and if the representation of June 21 had been shortened half an hour, the opera of the *Meistersinger* would be the master work of Wagner.

"LEON LEROY."

#### Waifs.

—A DESIDERATUM. The *Saturday Review* (London), alluding to a performance of Haydn's Symphony in E flat, known as "Letter T," suggests what every lover of Haydn's music certainly will second:

Haydn stands greatly in need of a Nottebohm, a Thayer, or a Ritter von Köchel, to prepare a chronological and thematic catalogue of his works, with as much assiduity as Giuseppe Carpani put together the anecdotes and chit-chat that bore reference to the artistic career of the "father of the quartet and symphony." It is provoking not to be able to affix anything like precise dates to more than one out of one hundred works of a composer so marvellously fruitful in production.

—The programme of Mr. Benedict's annual concert, at St. James's Hall, comprised *only fifty pieces*, vocal and instrumental, "which, with two or three exceptions, were all performed." For solo artists he had all the singers of any prominence in London operas and concerts, diverse instrumental virtuosos, and "ten conductors at the piano forte." The *Times* may well say that only Mr. Benedict and his indefatigable assistant, Mr. Nimmo (Nemo?) could have achieved such a concert. We think such achievements might as well be left to Nemo.

—One of the English papers tells us:

Professor Moscheles has composed a series of six new duets for the pianoforte, which Mme. Arabella

Goddard had the honor of playing, à *prima vista*, with the renowned pianist and composer, at her residence, a few days since. These pieces—which are published both at Leipzig and in London (by Messrs. Novello)—are as fresh and charming as they are original. One of them, a *fugue à la valse*, is a masterpiece. Indeed, they are all, in their way, masterpieces.

We hope so, but it is some time since the old composer used to produce works of genius, like the Septet.

—The enormous salaries now paid to the opera singers, and the great expense incurred in giving *monstre* benefit concerts, have, in more than one instance, involved the *beneficiaire* in serious loss. Mlle. Nilsson on Friday next, by singing at the Crystal Palace Handel Festival and at a private concert in Belgrave Square in the evening, will net nearly three hundred pounds! Such a day's gain by vocalizing in London is unparalleled in ancient and modern history. Sontag, Malibran, Grisi, and Persiani, the greatest singers ever known, when in the zenith of their popularity received less than a fourth of the terms now paid to Mlle. Nilsson for an evening concert.—*Orchestra*, June 6.

—Herr Georg Scherer has collected into a charming volume the "Village Songs of Germany" ("Schönsten Deutschen Volkslieder"), which he has published in Leipzig (Alphons Durr), with the music and sixty-eight original woodcuts. These songs are full of character and nationality.

—The death is announced, at his villa near Monza, of Stigelli, a tenor who may still be remembered by opera goers. He was German by birth, his real name being Stiegel.

—The rage for bird-singing contests is on the increase throughout the north of France and Belgium, and considerable bets change hands. The poor winged performers in this brutal amusement are first deprived of their sight by a red-hot iron passed over their eyes, and then confined in diminutive cages, in dark cellars, for fifteen days before the trial. Their removal into the fresh air and the rays of the sun cause them to give utterance to their joy in song, on which their proprietors bet—some for length of song, others for the various melodies performed.

—We find the following in the New York *Observer*, and similar statements having been going the rounds of the press for some time:

The little city of Freyburg, in Switzerland, has the largest organ in the world. When in full play it pours forth a tempest of sounds through a forest of pipes, "seven thousand and eight hundred in number," shaking the walls and foundation of the old St. Nicholas church, in which it stands. All the musical hands in Boston, New York and Philadelphia combined, would not make an orchestra equal in power to this mighty instrument alone. It is all the work of one man named Aloys Moser. He was poor; he was not thought to be a master in his art; he never received any adequate reward for his labor. Without assistance or suggestion from others, he formed the design of building for his native city an organ which travellers from distant nations should turn aside from their journeys to hear, and which, when heard in the darkness of the cathedral at night, should make an hour for them never to be forgotten. And so poor Moser began his life's work, and he persevered for long years, in the face of opposition and poverty and ridicule, until his task and his life were finished together. His aim may not have been the highest, nor his motive the best; but he persevered with the faith of a martyr till his work was done, and now it stands among all similar works in the world like Mt. Blanc among the mountains, peerless and alone.

There is a great deal of this sentimental and ignorant enthusiasm about famous organs,—especially among travelling correspondents of religious newspapers. The organ at Freyburg is not the largest in the world; there are many much larger organs in Europe; that of our own Boston Music Hall is full a third larger than the one at Freyburg. "Mt. Blanc among the mountains" is waste of fancy!

—The *Saturday Review* says: "There is a magic in the name of Mendelssohn which insures a favorable consideration for any book which professes to treat of him. Mlle. Polko must have reckoned largely on this prepossession when she resolved to publish her 'reminiscences' of the composer. The propriety of the title is apparent from the fact that, out of two hundred and sixteen pages, just fourteen are

comprised in the chapter of 'Personal Recollections,' which recollections, after all, amount mainly to this, that the authoress has heard Mendelssohn play upon the piano. So have many thousand persons who have not hitherto deemed it necessary to reprint shreds of Mendelssohn's published correspondence, diluted with a sentimental commentary, and garnished with two or three new but perfectly unimportant letters, and a preface resembling nothing so much as the poet's apology for his brevity in relating the adventures of the wise men of Gotham. In a word, Mlle. Polko's work is a specimen of audacious book-making. The only redeeming feature is some information respecting Mendelssohn's wife, who has hitherto been left much in the shade, but who appears to have been a charming woman, fully worthy of her husband.

—An immense building, to be known as the "Boston Rink," which will seat 10,000 persons, is now being erected on Tremont street. Our musical festivals will probably be given in this building in future. Promenade concerts will be given in it for the first thirty evenings after its completion in October.

—The *Weekly Review* gives the following list of novelties brought out in the orchestral concerts in New York, during the four last winters. By the PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY: Symphony, No. 1, Haydn; Overture to *Medea*, Bargaï; Concerto in C, Mozart; *Mazeppa*, Poème Symphonique, Liszt; Overture "*Prometheus*," Bargaï; Symphony, No. 1, in D, Mozart; Symphony "Episode from an Artist's Life," Berlioz; Introduction to *Tristan and Isolde*, Wagner; Concerto in F-sharp minor, Burgmüller; "*Nächtlicher Zug*," episode from Lenau's *Faust*, Liszt; Overture "*Columbus*," in D, Bristow; Symphony in D minor, Volkmann; 3d and 4th movements from "*Romeo and Juliet*" Symphony, Berlioz; Overture "*Othello*," F. L. Ritter.

By THEODORE THOMAS, in his Symphony Soirées: Symphony "To Fatherland," Raff; 2d part from "*Romeo and Juliet*" Symphony, Berlioz; Suite in D minor, Lachner; Toccata in F, Bach; Overture "*Bride of Messina*," Schumann; Triple Concerto, op. 65, C major, Beethoven; Symphonie Concertante, for violin and viola, with orchestra, Mozart; "*Mazeppa*," Symphonie Poem, Liszt; Symphony "*Harold in Italy*," op. 16, Berlioz; Symphony in C, Bargaï; Fantasia for piano, chorus and orchestra, op. 80, Beethoven; Intro. to *Tristan and Isolde*, Wagner; Allegro de Concert, op. 46, Chopin; Scherzo, B minor, op. 20, Chopin; Symphony "*Columbus*," op. 31, Abert; Episodes from Lenau's *Faust*: 1. "*Nächtlicher Zug*," 2. "*Mephisto Waltz*," Liszt; Suite in C, op. 101, Raff; Suite in C minor, op. 10, Grimm; Prelude to "*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*," Wagner; Selection from the *Missa Solennis*, Beethoven; Suite in D, Bach; Aria from *Armida*, Gluck; Unfinished Symphony in B minor, Schubert; "*Die Ideale*," Symphonie Poem, Liszt; Scene and Aria, op. 58, Rubinstein; Ballade, op. 16, Uhland's "*Des Sängers Fluch*," Bülow; Overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*, Berlioz.

—How is THIS? The London *Orchestra* publishes the following caution:

In *Watson's Art Journal* (New York) a letter is published said to be written by the Editor of the *Orchestra*, bearing our own address, and panegyricizing in inflated and absurd terms, the person to whom it is addressed, Mr. Harry Sanderson, the pianist, now in America, the writer quoting to the same effect the gentleman who is known as the musical critic of the *Times*. The name at the bottom of this letter is not that of the Editor of the *Orchestra*; nor of any person either now or ever on the staff of the *Orchestra*. The letter is in fact, if not a forgery, wholly unauthorized. Some one must have terribly hoaxed our good contemporary, *Watson's Art Journal*. Our own opinion of Mr. Harry Sanderson is by no means so lofty as this false document would imply. We regard him as a respectable mechanical performer who will probably do better in America than he has done here, simply because New York is not so exacting as London respecting the merit of a showy pianist. To say more than this would be to pay an empty compliment at the expense of truth. We would beg of our other American friends not to re-echo the falsehood which has hoaxed *Watson's Art Journal*.

## Special Notices.

### DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE LATEST MUSIC,

Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

#### Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

- Our Darling, Jennie Bayne. S'g and Ch. 2.  
Bb to f. C. A. Ingraham. 30  
A melodious song, in popular style.
- Grant and Peace. Quartet and Cho. for Male  
Voices. 3. Bb to g. E. Bishop. 35  
Were Rubens here. (C'est un Rubens). 2. G  
to g. "Barbe Bleue." 30  
A much applauded song, by the cerulean bearded  
gentleman.
- Maggie's Welcome. Sequel to Maggie's Secret.  
2. G to d. Claribel. 30  
Maggie's simple secret related to his going away.  
But it is all out now, since in this charming song she  
tells all the world he has returned.
- Going it blind. 2. A to e. W. F. Meir. 30  
An amusing comic song. Containing a good "moral"  
and warning to young men, not to be too eager in  
their homage of "dressed up" beauties.
- Barney Mavourneen. 2. Eb to e flat. White. 35  
A characteristic Irish song.
- La Notta e placida. (Awake, my lady dear). 4.  
D and C to a. L. W. Wheeler. 35  
A fine Italian song, with Italian and English words.  
Mr. Wheeler, for some time a resident in Italy, writes  
like one familiar with the language and the music of  
that country.

#### Instrumental.

- Pot-pouri. La Belle Helene. 4 hds. 3. Eb.  
T. Bissell. 75  
A very pleasing selection of melodies, very conveniently  
arranged for two performers.
- Speed away. With variations. 4. Ab.  
A. P. Wyman. 60  
A beautiful and well-known melody, with graceful  
variations.
- Swampscot Galop. 3. B. W. Atkinson. 40  
A spirited piece, with passages reminding lovers of  
the sea-side, of the rippling waves on the beach.
- Partant pour la Syria. Grand March. 3. G.  
G. B. Boris. 30  
Very taking, and contains the favorite French air  
indicated by the title.
- Champagne Charlie. Var. 3. C.  
A. P. Wyman. 60  
A favorite air, brilliantly varied.
- Un Mari-sage. From "La Belle Helene." Var.  
3. C. C. Wels. 40  
A much admired air, with easy variations.
- New and brilliant Dance Music from "Barbe-  
Bleue." Knight.  
Grand Waltz. "The Kiss." 2. D. 50  
Polka Redowa. 2. Bb. 30  
Polka. 2. D. 30  
A few of the sprightly airs in this very sprightly  
opera. "The Kiss" is the music of the hand kissing  
scene, (at the court of King Bobèche) which comes to  
such a comic termination, and the two Polkas contain  
favorite melodies.
- Ben Lomond. A beautiful Scotch dance. Arranged  
for the Guitar. 2. A. Hayden. 25  
For tripping on the light fantastic (Highland) toe,  
and is very merry music.
- Au Revoir. Caprice for Piano. 5. Ab, Db and  
Gb. G. D. Wilson. 60  
A rich melody, accompanied and varied finely.  
Pleasing throughout, and is also excellent practice.
- Promenaden Polka. 3. A. R. Wocke. 30  
A very sweet and striking air. "Promenaders" will  
be fortunate to have their measured steps so well accompanied.

ABBREVIATIONS.—Degrees of difficulty are marked from 1 to 7. The key is marked with a capital letter, as C, B flat, &c., A small Roman letter marks the highest note, if on the staff, an italic letter the highest note, if above the staff.

MUSIC BY MAIL.—Music is sent by mail, the expense being two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, (about one cent for an ordinary piece of music). Persons at a distance will find the conveyance a saving of time and expense in obtaining supplies. Books can also be sent at double these rates.



